SOME FUNDAMENTAL ERRORS OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

BY

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NOTE—So many requests have been received for copies of my Addresses on "Christian Science" that I have decided to publish several others in the near future. Among the titles of these Addresses will be the following :

"Christian Science and Natural Phenomena."

"Christian Science and the Bible."

"Christian Science and Christ."

"Christian Science and Healing."

The prices will be the same as for the present Address.

GORDON H. BAKER,

Montreal, Que. Dec., 1915

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SOME FUNDAMENTAL ERRORS

OF

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

My purpose in treating this subject is not simply to criticize the system of belief known as "Christian Science," but to strengthen your faith in the religion of Jesus Christ by throwing a picture of this new ism upon the background of your own belief, that by contrast you might see its fallacies, avoid its errors, and be content to follow the plain teachings of God's Word. Let it be known that in so doing I am not inspired by the fear that any of you will become Christian Scientists. Whether you will or will not is a matter for your own decision. My concern is to see that as far as possible the facts are placed before you, so that in the future your actions in this matter may be governed by intelligence.

Christian Science is more a philosophy than a religion. It is nothing more than a feeble attempt to harmonize various conflicting elements of certain philosophical systems of the past. From the philosophies of ancient Greece, the Brahmanism of India, the Pantheism of Spinoza, and the Idealism of Berkeley Mrs. Eddy has gathered her ideas. This jum-

bled philosophy she has baptized into a mixture of quotations from, and false interpretations of the Bible and called it "Christian."

Philosophy is an attempt to explain the facts of the Universe. Let us not be afraid of it because it has a foreign name. Every system of belief has an underlying philosophy. What the foundation is to the building, philosophy is to our system of thought. If the foundation is made of sand it will be only a matter of time when the building will fall. This is the weakness of Christian Science, the precursor of its coming doom. Its philosophy is absolutely false. It is false by every criterion of reason; false by every test of the Holy Scriptures; false by every testimony of experience. Hence Christian Science is fundamentally wrong.

But this does not mean that there is no truth in so-called "Christian Science." The foundation may be made of the wrong material and the building itself may be poorly constructed, but the furnishings may be of the best quality. A man in the city of Montreal desired to purchase a certain house. Arrangements were made with the owner to visit the property in order to ascertain the facts concerning it. This man, knowing his inability to properly judge the qualities of a house, took with him a friend who was an expert in the building trade. On entering the house the decorations were so splendid and the furniture so choice that the most favorable impressions were made upon the intending purchaser and his friend. All went

well until they entered the basement. Here the expert eye of his friend detected a number of serious defects in the foundation that could not be remedied without removing the building. It was also discovered that instead of the building being constructed of solid brick, as was supposed, it was only brick veneered, and that the wood inside of the brick encasing was of a very inferior quality. They were thoroughly satisfied that the house was not a good investment and the sale was not effected.

When one begins to read the Christian Science text-book, "Science and Health with key to the Scriptures," he has rather a favorable impression. The subject of the first chapter is "Prayer." The phraseology of this chapter is rather pleasing, the tone is elevated, the spirit in which it is written has all the gentleness characteristic of a woman, while many of its statements on the surface seem incapable of contradiction. The same is true, to a greater or less degree, of the entire book. Herein lies the danger for the popular mind. For many people are satisfied with pretty furniture and pleasing decorations no matter if the foundations are crumbling beneath. It was not the ugliness of the serpent that tempted Eve but its beauty and subtilty. No falsehood is more dangerous than a half-truth. It is only when we come to know the real principle underlying these high-sounding phrases, misleading and deceptive illustrations that we come to appreciate the multiplicity and magnitude of the errors of Christian Science.

Let us now observe some of the fundamental errors that characterize this system of belief. I say some, for we have time to consider but a few.

God

All systems of belief have for their ultimate goal the understanding and explanation of the great First Cause—God. It is very important that we should have correct ideas about God. For all our ideas have value only in proportion as we think rightly of Him. Moreover, the wealth or poverty of our characters will be determined by our conceptions of the character of God.

Dr. William E. Channing, a great New England thinker and preacher of the last century, said, that "the true idea of God unfolded clearly and livingly within us, and moving us to adore and obey Him and to aspire after likeness to Him, is the noblest growth in human, and I may add, in celestial natures." Recognizing this truth Christian Scientists make much of God; that is, they talk much about Him. A prominent Christian Science lecturer recently declared that "upon a correct comprehension of God depend the happiness, the peace, the true prosperity and the true usefulness of mankind." In this statement he will find himself in complete accord with the average Christian believer.

It cannot be denied that the conception which the average Christian has of God is all too inadequate. It is quite true also that the

Church is not doing all she might do, either to gain for herself, or to give to the world the exalted conception of God set forth in the Scriptures. If the entrance of Christian Science into the field of religious thought will act as a stimulant upon the Christian Church to make her know her own God better we may rejoice at its coming.

The pages of the Bible teem with expressions of the most profound thoughts and the most exalted ideas of the Divine Creator and Father of us all. Here we are told that God is one; that He is Spirit, Life, Light, Love; that He is self-existent and eternal; that He is holy, just and good; that He is our Father, the Creator and Sustainer of all; that He is infinite in wisdom and power; that He is present in all His power, in all places, at all times; that His supreme concern is the highest welfare of His children. What has Mrs. Eddy to add to this biblical conception of God? Nothing. At the same time we shall see that she has taken much away.

1. **His Personality.** What is personality? Mrs. Eddy would have us know that God cannot be personal because He is pure Spirit; that personality belongs only to so-called physical form. While we agree with Mrs. Eddy that God is Spirit, we deny that a physical body is an essential part of personality. A horse has a body but that does not constitute it a person. The new Standard Dictionary says that personality is "existence as self-conscious and rational."

F. W. Robertson says, "personality is made up of three attributes—consciousness, character, will." Dr. A. H. Strong says that personality is "self-consciousness plus self-determination in view of moral ends."

Hence all the qualities of personality, such as, self-consciousness, self-determination, character, will, are characteristics of spirit and spirit alone. Therefore, no spirit has any value in the universe apart from personality. The personality of a man is not his body, it is his spirit. The real man is the spiritual man. He will live on when the human form crumbles to dust.

In view of this truth the most sacred thing we know in all this world is personality. Apart from it life has no meaning for us. All the essential characteristics and capacities of our being are summed up in personality. Death cannot destroy it. Eternity cannot extinguish it. Only in the light of our own undying personality do we come to know God and understand that we are made in his image. The greatest truth, therefore, that we can know about God, in so far as it is possible for us to know truth at all, is that He is Personal Being.

In the light of His Divine Personality every attribute of God glows with infinite significance. He is our Father. His life is the throbbing heart of the universe. His love is the Father's love for His child. His truth is the balance-wheel of eternity. No wonder the great American orator, Daniel Webster, being asked what was his greatest thought, replied:

"The greatest thought that ever entered my mind was that of my personal responsibility to a personal God."

The crowning glory of the Christian religion is its personal God. Someone has said that "the transcendent moment for man, the moment of supreme promise and grandest hope was when the idea of a moral Deity entered his heart, when all the energies of religion came to be moral energies for the making of moral man. The moment when gravitation, navigation, the secrets of the sea or the stars or the earth were discovered had neither singly nor all combined equal or even approximate significance for man. Take from him this religion steeped in morality, made living by the moral character of its God, and you will leave him without the grandest energy, working for God and peace and progress, that ever came into his history or into his heart."

And yet this is just what Christian Science seeks to do. Mrs. Eddy says, "God is principle, not Person. The triune Principle, Life, Truth, and Love named God. God is Love and Love is Principle not Person." This is one of the many statements Mrs. Eddy makes in her denial of the personality of God. Now it is self-evident that no Principle can have moral character, for moral character is the essential and fundamental element of personality. Love and Holiness are unthinkable apart from personality.

When the Hebrews spoke of God they used the personal pronoun He, and never It. To them God was more than Law, He was Person. Wherever in the Bible God is represented as speaking of Himself the first personal pronoun is used. "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." Again and again in the writings of the Prophets occur the expressions, I am Jehovah, I am God, I am He. Surely these terms are expressive of personality and can never be intelligently applied to impersonal Principle.

By the mouths of these same Prophets God declares Himself to be "no mere tendency, no Principle, no law, but a living heart and urgent will, personal character and force of initiative, from whom proceed all principles and laws, and from whom they take their direction and power." Christianity does not consist in saying a lot of nice things about God, but in a personal recognition of, and a personal communion with His living character. The unfortunate thing about the God-Principle of Christian Science is that it is incapable of communicating itself through moral character to the human race.

Christian Scientists seem to be greatly disturbed by the human terms we apply to God in our worship. They tell us that "to attribute to God some personal form is to belittle the Divinity." But this is simply telling us what we already know. In the Theological Seminary I was taught that to represent Jehovah as having

body or form was to degrade Him to the level of heathen gods. In fact, I do not know any intelligent Christian who thinks of God as a magnified human being, with a physical form, sitting on a material throne far away in the sky.

It is true, there are many passages of Scripture which seem to ascribe to God the possession of bodily parts and organs, as eyes, ears, and hands. But these expressions are anthropomorphic and symbolic, and were never intended, even by the people who originally used them, to be taken literally. We should remember, however, that to speak of God in human figures is not to attribute to God a human form. We know that when we speak of His "all-seeing eye" we mean His universal knowledge. When we speak of His "heart" we mean His universal love. When we speak of His "hands" and His "mighty arm" we mean His universal power. How else can we speak of Him? Let us grant that all the terms we apply to God are inadequate, still they are the best we have.

When we call God "Our Father" we know that this title falls far short of the reality. "When we speak of God as planning and decreeing we know that we are merely making shift to express what is inexpressible by us." In fact, to think of God at all is to think of Him inadequately. But at present we have no alternative. Whatever the claims of Christian Scientists, they cannot help us. Instead of giving us a better conception of God they have

reduced Him to impersonal Law. Even now their chief object is to take away from our conception of God the supreme characteristic that endears Him to the human heart.

But it is very difficult to know just what Christian Scientists mean when they speak of God as Principle. Indeed, I am persuaded, after much reading on this question, that they do not all mean the same thing. Nor do the same people mean the same thing all the time. Sometimes in speaking of this Principle they deny it all the elements of personality. At other times they speak of it as though it were a person. This is especially true of Mrs. Eddy, the supposed discoverer and founder of the cult.

To her God is "Principle" and God is "All." "Is there more than one Principle? There is not. Principle and its idea are one, and this one is God." In another place she likens her God-Principle to the principle of mathematics. Now if there is only one principle in the universe then the principle of mathematics, and the principle of music, and Mrs. Eddy's God must be one and the same thing. Then she affirms that "this Principle is Life, Truth and Love." If that is so, then the life of God is no more to us than the life of mathematics, the truth of God than the truth of mathematics, the love of God than the love of mathematics. Will any intelligent person attempt to make a rational or religious application of the words life, spirit, mind, love, to the principle of mathematics? Yet that is what Mrs. Eddy has done

and what her followers are still doing, for there is only one principle.

Contrast with this, if you will, our Christian view, that there are in the universe many principles or laws, such as life, truth, love, holiness, beauty, affinity, gravitation, harmony, numbers, etc. That no one of these principles is God, nor when taken all together do they sum up the Divine Nature. God is greater than all His principles or laws. But these laws are all in God and emanate from Him. They are the ways in which He chooses to work out His Own Will, and taken together they express His Divine Personality.

We know that there can be no love where there is no person to love. Love, whether in God or man, is the spontaneous outflow of the heart and not the science of mind. God's purpose in sending Jesus into the world was not to demonstrate how much He knew about man, nor how much man may know about Him, but to demonstrate how much He loves man and how man may be saved from his sins through the expression of that love. God is Love, but Love is not God. The Apostle John said, "Love is of God."—1 John 4: 7.

2. **His Knowledge.** — Christian Scientists affirm that "God is Infinite Mind." If so, He must know everything that is knowable. But they tell us that God knows nothing of sin, sickness, death, matter, for these things really do not exist.

Now all Christians believe in the infinite knowledge of God. To us, God is the Infinite Spirit whose presence is everywhere. He is the life and law of the universe, the "Infinite and Eternal Energy that pervades all things." Not only does He pervade all things but He governs all things by the might of His Will. Only a God who knows all things and embraces all existence in His perfect understanding is worthy of our trust and worship.

Mrs. Eddy makes much of the "Allness of God." She says, "God is All-in-All. God is good. God is mind." According to this view there is nothing in the universe but "good mind." Hence, there is nothing outside of God for Him to know. Since sin, sickness and death do not exist in God, therefore, they do not exist at all. And since God does not know of sin and we can never know more than God, therefore we do not know of sin either. Surely, it requires a strange mind to accept such teaching. We are not surprise that Mrs. Eddy's God does not know of sin, for knowledge is never possessed by a principle. She says, "The Principle of music knows nothing of discord. God is harmony's self-hood. To Him there is no moral inharmony. God never made evil. He knows it not."

It is true that God never made sin. God made man a free moral Being, and it was in the exercise of his freedom that man chose to sin. The consciousnss of that sin is ever with us. To say that God does not know that sin, sick-

ness and death exist is to make Him inferior to man. It is to go contrary to all our intuitive and acquired knowledge both of ourselves and of the Supreme Being. How can He be God to me if He does not know all my personal experiences? How grateful we ought to be for the assurance that He does know. "Thou knowest my downsitting and my uprising; Thou understandest my thought afar off, Thou art acquainted with all my ways." — Psalm 139: 2, 3.

From the third chapter of Genesis to the last chapter of Revelation, the Bible recognizes the existence of sin. Again and again we are told that Israel sinned and "did evil in the sight of the Lord." The Psalmist recognized the fact that all sin is primarily against God, when he said, "Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned and done that which is evil in Thy sight. Hide Thy face from my sins and blot all my iniquities." In vain did Jesus teach His disciples to pray, "deliver us from evil," if the Father does not know that there is evil in the world. In vain also did Jesus Himself pray to the Father, saying, "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them from the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from evil."

Let us admit that our knowledge of God is very limited, that we have to speak of Him in terms familiar to us, though altogether inadequate, yet the fact remains that from the dawn of man's creation to the present time the human heart has instinctively cried unto God for deliv-

erance from evil. How vain this cry if God does not know that sin exists! On the contrary, we have the assurance that God not only knows of sin in man, but that with infinite concern and boundless love He has provided for man's salvation.

3. **His Work.**—Because God is Person He is eternally active and free to express Himself in a creation of His own choice. That He created the heavens and the earth is told us in the first sentence of the Bible. Just how this creation took place it is not easy to say. But we believe that God is greater than the universe which He has created, though He lives in it and works through it as the soul in the body. He is the source of all and the Lord of all.

Mrs. Eddy says that "Matter is unreal. There is no Matter. I believe in Matter only as I believe in evil that it is something to be denied and destroyed to human consciousness, and is unknown to the Divine." In her text-book she has a chapter on creation which is absolutely unintelligible. In her "Key to the Scripture" she attempts an explanation of the creation account as given in Genesis. She says, "creation consists of the unfolding of spiritual ideas and their identities, which are embraced in the Infinite Mind and forever reflected. These ideas range from the infinitesimal to infinity, and the highest ideas are the sons and daughters of God."

The Bible speaks of "a firmament in the midst of the waters." Mrs. Eddy says that

"spiritual understanding is the firmament." Again the Bible says that "God called the dry land earth; and the gathering together of the waters called He seas." Concerning these words Mrs. Eddy makes the amazing statement that "in metaphor, the dry land illustrates the absolute formations instituted by mind, while water symbolizes the elements of Mind." It is only when you remember that Mrs. Eddy does not believe in matter that you come to see how meaningless is the foregoing statement. According to her there is no dry land, no water. These words are only symbols for ideas of Infinite Mind. But we believe they are more than mere symbols for ideas; they are symbols for real objects. These objects are the expressions of the ideas of Divine Mind. When God said, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake," He was speaking of real matter and not ideas. But Mrs. Eddy declares that "ground and dust stand for nothingness." The reason why she does not believe in matter is because her God (Principle) is incapable of creating such a world as the one in which we live. She says, "God could not put mind into matter, nor infinite spirit into finite form." How could the principle of mathematics or the principle of music create a world? We understand that harmony is a principle on which all creation rests. But it is not the Creator, nor is it the Creation.

And still, Mrs. Eddy could not understand why there should be any opposition to her teachings. She said, "If any system honors God,

it ought to receive aid, not opposition, from all thinking persons. And Christian Science does honor God as no other theory honors Him. In view of the facts already stated does any sensible person think so? How can any system honor God that denies His personality, His freedom, His power to create a material world, His knowledge of the actual conditions in the world which He has made, and His providential care over all His creatures? The God of Christian Science is not the Christian's God.

Man.

There can be neither philosophy nor religion without man. Religion is man's sense of dependence upon God. But back of this experience is the philosophy of the man himself, and his relations to God. If we have a false conception of man we cannot have a true conception of his relation to the Divine Being. Here again Christian Science breaks down.

1. **His Body.**—There may be differences of opinion among Christians as to whether a man is constituted of two or three essential elements. Nevertheless, all Christians agree that he has at least two, namely, body and spirit. Just here Mrs. Eddy is in serious difficulty. She constantly speaks of the body and its diseases and yet she as constantly affirms that it does not exist. What folly to speak of a body if there is no such thing as matter! Listen again to Mrs. Eddy: "According to Christian Science, the first idolatrous claim of sin is, that matter

exists. If God is spirit and God is All, surely there can be no matter; for the divine All must be spirit. At best matter is only a phenomenon of mortal mind; but really there is no such thing as mortal mind. Man is not matter; he is not made up of brain, blood, bones, and other material elements. Man is idea; he is not physique. The human mind and body are myths. The blood, heart, lungs, brain, etc., have nothing to do with life, God."

Now it is self-evident that if there is no matter there can be no physical body. If there is no physical body (except in mortal mind which Mrs. Eddy says does not exist) then there can be no healing, for there is nothing to heal. Why, then, has Mrs. Eddy written a book of 700 pages containing some 214,000 words to show how to heal that which does not exist? Of course we will be told that it is not the body that is to be healed, but the error in mortal mind that the body exists and that it is sick that is to be removed. But when we are told that "really there is no such thing as mortal mind," it does not help us very much. The fact is that Christian Science cannot account for things as they are.

We have no quarrel with Mrs. Eddy when she says that man is not matter. But when she denies the existence of matter and thus precludes the possibility of man having a physical body, we must part company with her. Man is a spiritual being, destined to survive his

present body; but, as we know him at the present time, he is physical as well as spiritual. We do not believe that matter opposes spirit. On the contrary, we regard it as a form which expresses spirit.

The Bible tells us that "God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." This is the only man we know. When the sick were brought to Jesus He did not inform them of the non-existence of matter; nor did He tell them that they were not sick. To the man with a withered hand He said, "Stretch forth thy hand," and he stretched it forth, and his hand was healed. Jesus knew that He was dealing with the physical bodies of men, as well as with their souls. Nor had Paul any uncertainty about the body when he said: "Know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, which is in you, which ye have from God? And ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body." Again, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service." The Bible knows nothing of Mrs. Eddy's theory that matter does not exist. From cover to cover it recognizes the physical as well as the spiritual.

2. **His Will.**—We believe that man has intellect, sensibility, and will. That intellect is the soul knowing; sensibility is the soul feeling; and will is the soul choosing. The will is the

commanding general of all the soul actions. It is the imperial, executive, dominating power of the soul. The will occupies the seat of authority before which all the motives of our being present themselves to be accepted or rejected. While we recognize that over all the volitions and actions of men is the sovereign will of God, yet we hold to the freedom of man's will to choose how he shall act in view of the motives presented to him. Here is the door through which sin entered the world, and here is the door through which the Spirit of God may enter and drive sin out.

Mrs. Eddy teaches that man has no will of his own. "Man has no separate mind from God. Man is simply the reflection of God, the expression of God's being. Man possesses no intelligence or motive power of his own. Will is the motive power of error: mortal belief. Will, as a quality of so-called mortal mind, is a wrong-doer; hence it should not be confounded with the term as applied to mind or to one of God's qualities. Will power is but a product of belief. Human will is the animal propensity, not a faculty of soul. Christian Science silences human will."

The plain teaching here is, that since there is but one mind in the universe—God's mind, one will—God's will, man can have no will of his own; for he is not a distinct personality, but, as Mrs. Eddy calls him, "a reflection of God in the looking glass of divine science." She says that "in Christian Science man is governed by

God, divine principle, as numbers are controlled and proved by his laws." That is to say, that just as two and two always make four under the law of mathematics, so man always wills God's will under the divine principle. Thus, man is robbed of his chief glory, the freedom of his will. But why should man have a will? There is no choice to be made. There is only one thing in the universe, divine mind. That mind is good and we are but reflections of that good mind. It is true, Mrs. Eddy speaks of a human will, but it is only a quality of mortal mind and "mortal mind does not exist."

Oh, my hearers, be not deceived! I care not who is responsible for sin, it is in our midst as an awful reality. The inexorable demand of eternal law is, that we choose between sin and God. We must choose. In the dawn of man's creation the supreme test was a test of will. There were the trees from which man might eat; and there was the tree the fruit of which he must not eat on pain of death. Whatever these trees represent, the fact remains that man disobeyed God. He chose to sin in the free exercise of his own will. It has ever been so in the history of man. The whole Bible recognizes this fact. From the Old Testament comes the command, "choose ye this day whom ye will serve." From the New Testament comes the voice of the Master, saying, "Ye will not come to me that ye may have life." "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I

speak of myself." Man has a will that is relatively independent. It is in the exercise of this will that he chooses God or sin, life or death.

3. **His Moral Character.**—The Bible tells us that man was made in the image of God. By this we understand that man was created a spiritual, personal, and moral being. This also Christian Science denies.

According to Mrs. Eddy, God is eternal principle—mind. Man is not a separate being. He is the reflection of God. She says, "your mirrored reflection is your own image or likeness. If you lift a weight, your reflection does this also. If you speak, the lips of the likeness move in accord with yours. Now compare man before the mirror to his divine Principle, God. Call the mirror divine Science, and call the man the reflection. Then note how true, according to Christian Science, is the reflection to the original. As the reflection of yourself appears in the mirror, so you, being spiritual, are the reflection of God."

Do you see the fallacy of this picture? First, the God before the mirror is not a personal God. Then, since there is nothing in the universe, nor anywhere else, but divine Principle-mind, there can be no mirror outside of it, in which it may be reflected. Still further, when you seriously ask yourself, "what is a reflection?" your only answer can be that it is "nothing." The man who stands before the mirror has mind, character, will. But his reflection has no mind, no character, no will, no capacity whatever. Fur-

thermore, a reflection cannot be a creation. It must be as eternal as the original. And yet the Bible says that God created man. But Mrs. Eddy says that man is "co-existent and co-eternal with God."

She continues, "there is really no finite mind, no finite consciousness. There can be no evil mind because mind is God. There is no finite soul nor spirit. Spirit is God and man is his image and likeness. There can be but one mind because there is but one God. All space is filled with God. God has countless ideas. Man is the family name for all ideas. Man is God's reflection needing no cultivation, but ever beautiful and complete." Thus with one stroke of the pen, Mrs. Eddy deprives man of all moral quality. Man is only an imitating reflection, a perfect nothing.

Let me draw for you another picture which, to me, more truly interprets the Biblical statement that man was made in the image and likeness of God. When a boy is born he is the image and likeness of his father. (And Adam lived 130 years and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image.—Gen. 5: 3.) He has a body, an intellect, a will, a conscience like his father. As the boy grows he realizes that in all things he is subject to his father's will. And yet he knows perfectly well that he has his own sphere in which he can move with perfect freedom by the independent exercise of his own will. He comes to understand that although he is made in his father's image he is a separate

personality. He is free to disobey, but always at his own risk. If he disobeys, his father loves him still, because he recognizes in the son his own image. The image may be marred, but it is not destroyed. The body may be disfigured, the intellect dulled, the will weakened, and the conscience numbed but the image is still there.

God has no physical form. Therefore, to say that man was made in his image does not refer to the body. It means that man was made in the spiritual likeness of God, for God is spirit. It means that because God is person we are persons too, with all the faculties that personality implies. It means that because God is a moral Being therefore, man has a moral nature. Holiness and love were the essential characteristics of original man. But man is still essentially good. The image has been defaced but not destroyed. The lost coin still bore the image and superscription of the King, even though it did not know it.

Because man is possessed of this moral faculty, the perfect image of the divine may be restored in him. He cannot restore it himself, no matter how well he may try. It is God who makes "the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, to dawn upon him."—2 Cor. 4: 4.

What a wonderful creature man is! Endowed with such a nature, made in such an image, we need not wonder that God should have such infinite concern for his salvation. But Mrs. Eddy

declares that the real man is perfect; that he never has sinned and never can. Well, how could he? He is only a reflection in a mirror that does not exist. Even if God could sin the reflection could not, for it has no moral quality of its own. But take Mrs. Eddy at her own word and suppose that the real man is perfect. Since there is no other man in the universe but the real man, why do we bother about the other fellow? Why do we have Christian Science churches, at large cost, and well paid lecturers making fervent appeals to the people to accept Christian Science in order that they may thus destroy sin, sickness, and death, and realize the perfect man? One of these lecturers recently said that "the Gospel shows us how we may attain to this perfect life." If the real man never knew any other than the perfect life, and if there is no other than the real man, who are the we that are to attain and what is the attainment? Whatever responsibilities your moral nature may involve, thank God that you are a man or woman made in the image and likeness of God, and not an impersonal mimicking reflection.

Sin.

We have already spoken of the fact of sin. But so important is it, and so emphatic is Mrs. Eddy's denial of it, that it deserves still further consideration at this time. Let it be remembered that we are not dealing with the nature of sin, nor with its origin, but simply with the facts of sin.

According to Mrs. Eddy, sin does not really exist. It is a delusion of mortal mind. She says, "Evil has no reality. It is neither person, place, nor thing; but is simply a belief, an illusion of material sense. Evil is nothing. As manifested by mankind it stands for a lie, nothing claiming to be something. 'It is difficult for the sinner to accept divine Science because Science exposes his nothingness." Is such teaching in harmony with God's word, and with human experience?

1. **The Bible.**—The central theme of the Scriptures is salvation (deliverance) through Jesus Christ. This deliverance is not simply from an approaching doom, but from a present malady. It is the sin of this world that Jesus came to destroy. There can be no salvation where there is no sin. There is not a book in the Bible that does not mention the fact of sin The constant appeal of the Scriptures is an appeal against sin as an existing evil. The law was given to condemn sin. Endless sacrifices were made to atone for sin. The tears of the Psalmist are his confession of, and repentance for, sin. The fierce invectives of the prophets are God's denunciations of sin. The coming of Jesus into the world was God's effort to save men from sin. The preaching of the Apostles was a message of salvation from sin. The Bible has no meaning apart from the fact of sin.

But that is not all. Sin, according to the Scriptures, is universal. The malady has infected the race. "There is none good, no not

one," is the cry of the Psalmist. "He will convict the world in respect of sin," is the testimony of Jesus concerning the Holy Spirit. "All under sin" is the burning message of Paul. This is the awful truth of the Bible. It was written to show man to himself as a sinner, and to reveal to him God's way of salvation in Jesus Christ. "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" was written to show that sin and its consequences do not exist, and that man has been under an illusion. Read the Bible and you will be convicted of your sins and cry to God for mercy. Read Mrs. Eddy's book and you will learn the amazing fact that you are not a sinner, that you never was a sinner, and that God never made any sacrifice for you.

2. **Human Experience.**—Is there any real testimony to sin outside of the Bible? Yes; the testimony is universal. We may talk of the harmony of the universe, and the music of the spheres, but all the time there is ringing in our ears the jarring discord of sin. Every page of human history is stained with its awful blight. Every life has felt the burden of its pernicious effects. Every form of human society has had its fondest relationships betrayed, and its highest ambitions blasted.

The religions of mankind with their sacrifices and their supplications, the governments of mankind with their courts and their penal and reformatory instituions, the literature of mankind, in poetry and prose, all bear striking testimony to the presence of sin. One cannot

observe the greed, the falsehood, the dishonesty, the vice, the drunkenness, the malice, and the cruelty that characterize our common life without being profoundly impressed with the fact of sin. Since the time our race began and

> "Man's first disobedience,
> Brought death into the world,
> And all our woe, with loss of Eden,"

not a solitary being has escaped the effects of sin. While Mrs. Eddy denies the existence of evil and says, that "man is incapable of sin," the world rolls on with its teeming millions and sin continues to work havoc in the earth. Blinding ourselves to its existence will not effect the cure. The ostrich that buries its head in the sand does not make the hunter a mere idea, nor deliver itself from the danger of his arrows.

One the greatest needs of our time is the quickening of the public conscience to a fuller recognition of the reality of sin. I am now looking into the faces of men and women who know sin by personal experience. The lines are upon your faces, the stains are upon your hearts, the sting is in your conscience. No argument can convince you that sin is an illusion. Let us render unceasing praise to God for Him who delivers us from sin. Let us plunge into the fountain opened for sin. Let us cling to Him who gave Himself a ransom for sin.

Prayer.

Because God is a personal God, and man is a personal being, prayer is the most natural thing in the world. Between God and man sin has separated. The distance is not one of mathematics but one of morals. It is the distance between sin and holiness. When a boy has disobeyed his father he instinctively feels that there is a mighty distance between them. The closer the father comes to him physically the father the boy feels to be from him morally. It is only when their heart relations are made right that the distance disappears. Prayer is the child talking to his father in an effort to get and keep the heart relations right. The philosophy of religion can never be understood apart from prayer. To undervalue the necessity of prayer, to misinterpret the meaning of prayer, to misunderstand the nature of prayer, and thus to fail in prayer, is to fail at the very heart of our religion.

Mrs. Eddy devotes a whole chapter in her text-book to the subject of prayer. But it is not Christian prayer. "God is Principle, not person," and Principle never did hear and never can answer a real prayer. If God is Principle and not person, one might just as well pray to the principle of mathematics, or the principle of music, or the law of gravitation. Unfortunately, Mrs. Eddy's Principle is not free. She says, "Asking God to be God is a vain repetition. God is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever; and He who is immut-

ably right will do right without being reminded of His province. Who would stand before a black-board and pray the principle of mathematics to solve the problem? The rule is already established and it is ours to work out the solution. Shall we ask the divine Principle of all goodness to do His own work? His work is done, and we have only to avail ourselves of God's rule in order to receive His blessing, which enables us to work out our own salvation."

According to these quotations from Mrs. Eddy's chapter on prayer, you will observe that God has done all He can do and all He intends to do. Hence it is useless for us to look to Him for help. All the rest remains for us to do. It is vain to ask God for mercy, for God cannot show mercy. It is useless for us to seek pardon for our sins, for sin does not exist and God does not pardon. He is eternal, unchanging Principle. We must bring ourselves up to this eternal rule in the universe and our problems will be solved. What advantage, then, have Christians over the heathen? None whatever. The heathen cries in vain to his gods of wood and stone, and Christians cry equally in vain to a blind principle.

In the prayer of Christian Science man does it all. And yet you must remember that he is only a reflection with no mind of his own. A Christian Science lecturer, speaking of prayer, said, "If one had a gold mine filled with the precious metal he would not think it consistent to

pray for gold, but would expect to help himself to that which was already his." The gold here represents God. Just as the gold cannot hear nor respond so the God of Christian Science is deaf to our cry and cannot respond to our needs.

How different the picture given in the Bible. God is represented as a loving Father whose son has wandered away from home. The Father goes out to meet him while he is yet a great way off. Or, God is a kind Shepherd who hears the cry of His lost sheep and goes out upon the mountain to find it and bring it home. In all the Bible God is represented as making overtures to man and coming with positive help and blessings to his rescue.

Oh, my hearers, thank God for a better faith than Christian Science. In your deepest heart you know that you have sinned against heaven. At your best you have felt yourself undone. Out of the depths of your heart you have cried unto God for mercy. All the time you were conscious that it was no mere mental or physical exercise. You knew that as a child you were talking to your Heavenly Father. Deep was calling unto deep, and you knew that the response which came to you was no mere echo, but the unmistakable voice of your Heavenly Father. That voice had a message for you straight from the heart of God. It said: "Fear not my child, I love you with infinite love. You have sinned but I have forgiven you. You have stained your garments but I have cleansed them. You have sold yourself to sin but I

have redeemed you. You have wounded yourself but I have healed you. You have imprisoned yourself but I have delivered you." And then like a little child, whose tears have been kissed away by the lips of a loving mother, you have gone your way with a new contentment and delight.

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him? Ask, and it shall be given you; for everyone that asketh receiveth."